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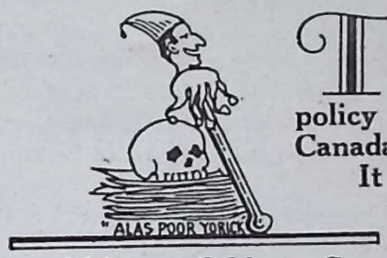
Those Whom the Gods Destroy



THE TORONTO SATURDAY NIGHT has had several editorials strongly condemning the attitude of the Paramount Publix in relationship to its new policy governing the Trans-Canada chain of theatres across Canada, which it controls.

It is alleged that recent notifications have gone forward to London and New York producers of musical comedy and dramatic offerings announcing that no bookings would be available in Canada.

Canada has steadily had a diminishing number of road show attractions, but the general opinion has been that this was due to the fact that a fewer number of road shows were available. However, last year when Torontonians desired a change from motion pictures, they had an opportunity to see several good shows during the season in Toronto, or they visited New York for several weeks and satisfied their craving in this direction by doing two shows a day.

If those in control of the legitimate theatres in Canada believe that cutting the public off from legitimate attractions will stimulate an added interest in Talking Pictures, or increase motion picture receipts by giving theatres an opportunity to charge regular show prices for Talking Motion Pictures at houses formerly devoted to the drama, they will find that their vision is at fault, for pictures like "All Quiet on the Western Front," are few and far between.

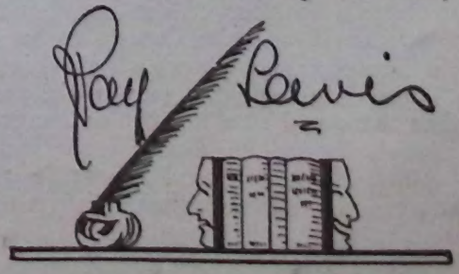
Incidentally, the motion picture public needs a change; and forcing the public to depend upon one form of entertainment for their theatre amusement will force a reaction of indifference and apathy from the public.

The policy as advocated in Canada, in regard to dramatic entertainment, makes one wonder if the saying, "Those whom the gods destroy they first make mad," is running true to tradition. If the Paramount Publix wishes to destroy itself in Canada by exciting further antagonism from Canadians, who still re sent the absorption of the Famous Players Canadian by this company; and think that the deal was as "raw" as the Street in Montreal termed it, let them continue with a policy which more than ever stresses the Combine Angle, by revealing that this company so controls the theatres of Canada that the public is obliged to witness only what this company's policy will give it by way of theatre entertainment.

The entire American Film Industry will pay the price of such action as this knowledge precipitates; and it will have results, for wherever one goes this question of being forced to witness Talking Pictures only, through the exclusion of the drama, is being discussed indignantly; and among the expressions heard is, "I'm sick of Talking Pictures."

This sounds like "bad medicine" for the Motion Picture Industry to take; and but corroborates our contention that mergers are not necessarily a proof of Great Brain Power.

It is not size, but quality which counts, for the size of a head, like the size of a merger, may be due to much, too much, "watered stock."



RAY PRESENTS

RAY LEWIS

THE PRESS reported a Warner distributing arrangement in Canada through Famous Players; and other distribution arrangements affecting important distributing units have been consummated. For instance, it is reported that RKO and Universal have negotiated a $3,000,000 rental deal, the United Artists has closed arrangements giving them bookings with Warners, Loew and Publix. The Warner, Fox and Loew interests have put over a booking deal.

In Canada it is reported that the policy of Famous Players, through Paramount Publix control, will be to divide Canadian territory up into units; and that each unit will be governed by a central head, under the jurisdiction of Head offices.

THE POSITION of the Independent distributor and exhibitor presents itself in all this division of territory; and it looks as if the day of uncontrolled independence had passed. The Independent Producers have either been absorbed, or are indirectly affiliated, since the banking interests of the various organizations overlap and interlock; and our Industry has arrived at a stage, towards which it has been unconsciously steering for several years, when Wall Street is in control of policies.

This is going to give the Independent Producer what is termed "a break," for the interlocked bankers will take care that there is no "freeze-out" of their individual interests. So far, it appears that of all the Independents, Tiffany alone is playing a "lone hand," and The Digest is adding to its daily prayers, "How long, O Lord, how long?" for the "Handwriting on the Wall" is already visible, and to stay in business in this Industry, as far as producing and distributing issues are concerned, means to get some theatre tie-up.

NOW what about the Independent theatre owner? After the producer-exhibitors have handed out the product to each other and their indirectly affiliated interests, what will be left for the Independent exhibitor? It appears that he will have as much left for him as he had left for him previously, because if we take Canada as an example, the first run houses cannot absorb all the big pictures, unless the Trans-Canada plays a part in the absorption; and even then there will be a number of features which cannot be placed, for lack of theatre room, and because of prices. All the "theatre gravy" cannot be lapped up, unless theatre shareholders are dumber than I think they are.

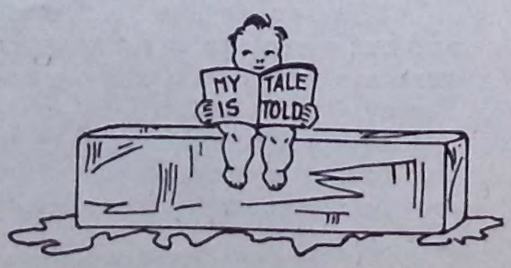
There is the possibility of a curtailment of import into Canada, in respect to pictures, but this does not sound logical, when the domestic market in the United States is in need of a supply for approximately 22,000 houses, and the pictures are there waiting to make revenue.

IF the legitimate houses in the United States become wired, this will add to the possibilities of an outlet; and then there are the new houses which always come along, in the United States and Canada.

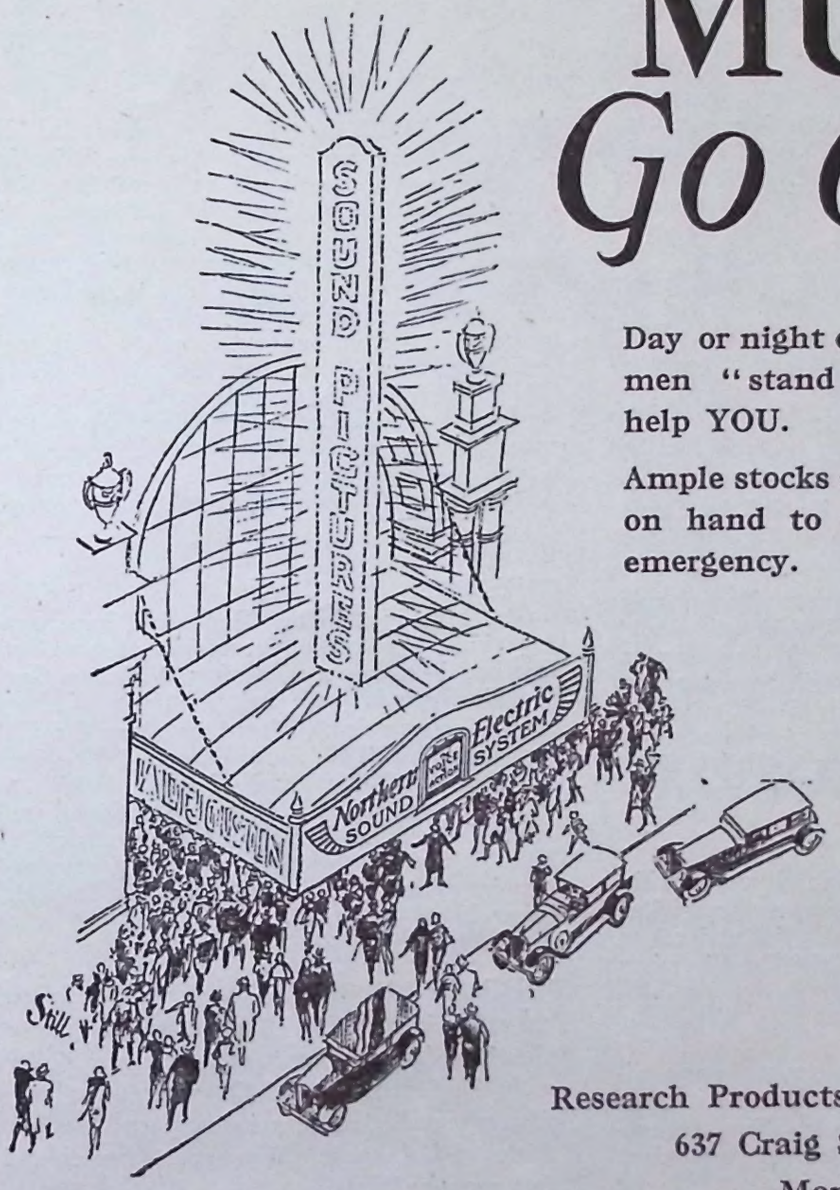
It may be that Banking Interests may direct their branch offices, in various communities, not to co-operate in building theatres, endeavoring through the control of finance to control the theatre-building, but should such a policy be followed, industrialists and financiers or merchants in these communities may be disposed to withdraw their banking interests from banks who refuse to co-operate; giving their business to a rival concern, for there is still some banking competition left, all the banking interest does not directly go into one "Melting Pot," although there may be a head "Chef" of Finance, who does all the "Stirring."

LET us recapitulate in relationship to the Independent Exhibitor, he will be no worse off than he was, previous to the booking arrangements between the Big Fellows. No one has ever been known to turn away business. The Independent theatreowner has not a chance to remain in business unless he unites his strength with his fellow-independents.

Through such a combination, representing buying power, he becomes a market for something for which the World of Trade and Commerce is hungry, he becomes a Power; and gathers unto himself the power of a sufficient strength with which to protect his own interests.



The Show MUST Go On!



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Observations

By The Editor

FOX has secured the services of Gerald Fielding, well-known English leading-man, who arrived in New York and proceeded immeditaely to Hollywood where he will cast for an important role. Mr. Fielding supported Alice Terry in the London production of "The Garden of Allah."

* * * *

THE WARNER sales deal for Canada was promoted through the services of Claude C. Ezell, General Sales Manager of Warner Bros., Ned E. Depinet, General Sales Manager of First National, and B. Lyon, Canadian Sales Manager for Warner Bros, and First National. Mr. J. J. Fitzgibbons acted for the Famous Players Canadian.

The deal involved the distribution of Warner Bros., First National and Vitaphone features to be played in all of the Famous Players theatres across Canada. The announcement came from Sam E. Morris, Vice-President of Warner Bros.

* * * *

SEYMOUR HICKS, one of England's choice comedians, will make his first big English feature at Elstree, an adaptation of "The Love Habit," by Louis Verneuil.

* * * *

ROBERT LORAINE will be cast for the leading role in Basil Dean's British feature, "The Fourth Wall" by A. A. Milne, famous British author. The production which is an Associated Radio Picture will have a prominent British cast of players. Dorothy Boyd, who has been appearing in "Bitter Sweet," has been released from her engagement to appear in "The Fourth Wall." Basil Dean has adapted the Milne story and will also direct the picture.

* * * *

FEDERAL Judge Paul J. McCormick dismissed without prejudice the copyright infringement case filed by William G. Curtis against Marion Davies and others associated with her in the production of "The Floradora Girl," a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer release.

* * * *

"HIGH TREASON," the British Gaumont feature, directed by Maurice Elvey, had a successful three days' engagement at the Madison Theatre, Toronto, creating some excellent publicity for British productions through the quality of this production.

* * * *

UNIVERSAL'S "All Quiet on the Western Front" received a real British boost when Lloyd George pronounced the following verdict on its merits:

"I think it is a marvelous film."

Meanwhile the New Zealand Censor Board reconsidered its banning of this most interesting feature, and the picture will be released in that country.

* * * *

BERNARD SHAW, who has appeared in a Talking news reel, has at last given his consent to the adaptation of his plays for the screen. In signing on "the dotted line," which had a row of cyphers even Shaw could not resist, he predicted the death of poor old Drama. However, we have heard of this death for sometime; and yet Little Theatres, and Theatre Guilds persist in being born; and if Lazarus could be raised from the dead, who can say just what may happen to the drama?

* * * *

THE FORMER Premier of Canada, the Hon. Mackenzie King, appeared on the screen in Toronto, at the Madison Theatre, in the Universal Star Reel, during a visit of the Liberal chief with his sister. Mr. Joseph Atkinson, President of the Toronto Star, was also presented just for a flash. There was some publicity about the reticence of the former Premier, to appear in pictures, when several views were taken of him for a former news reel, but certainly the only evidence of bashfulness in the Universal Star News Reel was that exhibited by Mr. Atkinson, whom we know to be sincerely shy of cameras and publicity, and of whom one caught but a smiling glimpse. The former Premier appeared to be enjoying his screen appearance. In fact everybody does, that is the "catch" in motion pictures!

* * * *

THE PRESIDENT of the Board of Trade was asked by Mr. Day, in the House of Commons, London, July 25th, how many linear feet of standard negative film had been imported during 1929 into Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the origin of these imports.

The information disclosed that from the U. S. the import was 3,372,894, from France, 1,318,650; Germany contributed 1,097,860, Italy 238,552, British India 172,998, Belgium 130,585, Kenya 60,336, Australia 58,826, Irish Free State 51,509, other countries contributed 186,613, making the total imports of standard negative film into Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 6,688,823 linear feet.

* * * *

THE DAILY REVIEW reports the following interesting information, "According to a survey just completed by Halsey, Stuart and Company, in co-operation with the Department of Commerce, for every foot of film exported, American industry and business secure a return of $1 in trade. Film exports run around 3,000,000 feet per year."

* * * *

SOMEWHERE in The Digest, and not in France, there is a statement about the passing of the Warner Bros. dividend, which was news apparently to one of the Warners, but since Presidents of companies do not always know when their own stock is to become "bullish," it is possible that they do not know about plans to pass dividends, for at a meeting of the Warner Bros. directors it was decided to pass the quarterly dividend on the common stock of $1.00, but the 55c quarterly dividend on the preferred will be paid September 1st.

Fox Books Its 48 Features Into Warner Houses--

That's What the Trade Paper Headlines Have Just Announced. Some Few Weeks Ago the Same Papers Made the Following Announcement:--

Publix Books Fox 100% For All Their Houses

Is It Not Significant That the Two Largest Circuit Owners Have Selected FOX PRODUCT for Their Theatres?

Only One Answer--"QUALITY"

Hold Your Playing Time Open for 48 Fox Box Office Stimulators. Our Representative Will Call on You Soon and It Will Repay You to Await His Visit.

Fox Film Corporation

HARLEY L. CLARKE, President.

Montreal - Toronto - St. John - Winnipeg - Calgary - Vancouver

Perkins Report New Installations

The Toronto office of the Perkins Electric Company Limited report another busy two weeks; during this period the following theatres purchased Simplex projectors, Morelite Lamps, Hertner Transverters, and Walker Sound Screens: The Goderich Theatre, Goderich, Ontario; Lyceum Theatre, Hamilton, Ontario, and the Kenwood Theatre, Toronto, Ontario.

The Lyric Theatre, St. Mary's, Ontario; and Rex Theatre, Toronto, purchased Morelite Lamps, and Walker Sound Screens.

The Perkins Company also report the sale of Simplex Projectors to the following theatres: Regent Theatre, Windsor, Ont.; Royal Theatre, Bowmanville, and Star Theatre, Carleton Place, Ont.

New Zealand Taxes Talking Pictures Heavily

The New Zealand's new economy Budget, which the Prime Minister, Mr. Forbes, introduced into the House of Representatives, as reported in The Daily Film Renter, contains a very decided British producers' preference. The new taxes include an ad valorem tax of 10 per cent. on British Sound films and a similar tax of 25 per cent. on foreign sound films.

It is reported that these taxes which follow closely on the Commonwealth Budget, are likely to have a noticeable adverse effect upon foreign film distribution in Australasia, the two territories being what is termed to a large extent, interdependent.

Prince Thinks Talkies Will Improve In Time

The Evening Telegram reports an interesting interview with Mr. Wright, production editor of the British Movietone News. Mr. Wright explains how he managed to get Bernard Shaw to appear in the Sound News Reel, his experience with Mussolini, and other world celebrities. His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, appeared to be interested in how it was all done, asking to be shown the recording apparatus, after he was filmed at a military function.

After several explanations the Prince is reported as bestowing his rare smile upon his informer and stating: "Of course, they will improve in time, but personally I don't like the talkies."

Busy Time for M-G-M. Studios

A very busy time is being had at the M-G-M Studios, at Culver City. It is expected that this summer will break all production records. There are twenty productions in the process of completion. An average of eight productions at one time has been maintained by M-G-M for months, and will continue. Some of the new productions are "Way For a Sailor," starring John Gilbert; "Forward March," starring Buster Keaton; "Remote Control," with Andre Luguet; King Vidor's "Billy the Kid," "The March of Time," M-G-M all-star show; "Like Kelly Can," all-star; and "The Great Day," starring Joan Crawford.

Directors of M-G-M who are working on new stories include Jack Conway, preparing "The New Moon" as a starring vehicle for Lawrence Tibbett and Grace Moore; William C. De Mille, with the well-known best seller "The Passion Flower;" Lionel Barrymore, who will direct "Never the Twain Shall Meet;" George Hill, now resting from "The Big House" and preparing for "The Dark Star," in which Marie Dressler and Wallace Beery will appear; Edgar McGregor and Nick Grinde, who did "Good News;" Charles Brabin and Arthur Robinson.

Television Is Here

Variety reports that the first Television Broadcast Station in the U. S. to be put into operation will be the WMAG of Chicago's Daily News, and that the Western Television Corp., will put on the Chicago market 1,200 television receiving sets to sell from $200 up. Now that we really have Television; and it is no longer "around the corner" but "over our heads," I'll tell-a-one. It is easier to talk to some people than look at them, and incidentally this age appears to be operating just to give Big Boy Public something to play with. Talking Pictures, Radio, Television, Tom Thumb Golf, flying, etc., etc. Will it not be boring when we arrive at a stage of being obliged to learn the art of entertaining ourselves and others!

THE HERTNER

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"IF YOU SHOW PICTURES, YOU NEED THE TRANSVERTER"

because it means less current cost, Better Projection, Easier Operation and Control, with a minimum of cost.

SOUND is being added to *SIGHT* in the Moving Picture Industry.

Better Projection requirements are becoming more and more exacting and varied.

More light is required than in installations heretofore. Particularly is this true with some of the sound transmitting screens as compared with the reflecting type of screen.

This means more current in the arc at the projector than previously used.

The Transverter produces steady direct current, hence the arcs are quiet and constant.

So generally is their merit recognized that there are more Transverters in use than all other makes combined. They are the motor generator masterpiece of the age.

Its great popularity is due to its acknowledged superiority, achieved as the result of fourteen years of experience in designing and manufacturing motor generator equipment expressly for every Motion Picture requirement.

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Bargain Hour at the Strand

For the benefit of the workers who could not take advantage of afternoon prices, the Strand Theatre, Calgary, Alta., during the summer months, has instituted a "supper-time bargain hour." From five-thirty to six-thirty the admission charge is only twenty-five cents.

This plan has been tried out during the past few weeks, without having been advertised very extensively. The management found that the attendance, in this hour, increased on the average of one hundred people. It is believed by the management that when the plan is widely known, this hour will become extremely popular.

This plan has many advantages for the patrons. One of these is that the patrons will have the privilege of choosing any seat in the house, for the same price. Another advantage is that everyone will be assured of a seat.

Ontario Scenic Films Shown in U.S.

A great deal of interest has been evinced by the showing of Ontario scenic pictures in United States. These depict sport life in Ontario, also a great many beauty spots. The films are set to music.

Mr. G. W. Brownridge, vice-president of the Twilight Picture Corporation, New York, stated that film exhibitors in some of the largest cities in the United States were giving these pictures, which were taken under the supervision of the Ontario Government Motion Picture Bureau, a very important place on the program.

Ontario people may have to wait quite a long while before seeing these pictures, as no Canadian distribution, as yet, has been arranged.

Fox Films Nature Recording

Fox Films Corporation have taken a great many sound records of winds, waterfalls, streams, etc., around Banff Springs Hotel, these will be introduced into pictures; and will reveal our players walking by lakes, canoeing, and climbing mountains, which they have never been near, or have never seen. They say there are "tricks in all trades," this is one of ours!

(Special to Digest from Winnipeg)

Fire which was confined to the operating room of the Elite Theatre, Kamsack, Sask., did damage Wednesday evening, July 23, when one of the reels caught fire and exploded in the operating room. The first show was still in progress at the time, but operator T. Gilbert immediately put on the house lights, and the shutters on the projecting room automatically closed. The patrons were quietly notified by the manager, Mr. Spector, and there was no undue excitement, everyone leaving the building in orderly fashion.

In "The New Movietone Follies of 1930," romance musical production at the RKO Winnipeg Theatre, Marjorie White bursts forth in her full glory as the leading comedienne of the audible screen. Miss White has a made-to-order role which gives her every opportunity to display her comedy talents beside being featured in two spectacular musical numbers and sharing honors with El Brendel in another song. Marjorie is a Winnipeg young lady, a former member of the Winnipeg Kiddies. She is going somewhere in the movie world.

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BOX 7 — DIGEST

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Supreme Track Heads and Turntables for Powers or Simplex Projectors. Excellently machined, perfectly designed, easily attached, perfect results on track or disc. Built by engineers to exacting requirements.

Celco Junior Equipment with Supreme Track Heads, and Turntables, Vocalite Sound Screen, Operadio Speaker, Operadio Main Amplifier, Operadio Faders, and Operadio Head Amplifiers, complete with Batteries, Tubes, etc., $3,750.00.

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Round About the Studios

Cliff Edwards and Edward Brophy. who were teamed as comedy doughboys in Buster Keaton's "The Dough Boys," a comedy of "the late unpleasantness," will go back to France together after the war as buddies in "Those Three French Girls," under the direction of Harry Beaumont. Reginald Denny, Fifi Dorsay, Yola Davril and Sandra Ravel, are also members of the cast. The story is by Dale Van Every, Arthur Freed and Richard Shayer. The adaptation and continuity is by Sylvia Thalberg and Frank Butler and the dialogue by P. G. Wodehouse.

Blanche Sweet has been signed by Radio Pictures to play the role of Queenie in "The Silver Horde," Rex Beach novel now being made into a talker under the direction of George Archainbaud. Among those in the cast of this production are Raymond Hatton, Joel McCrea, Evelyn Brent, Louis Wolheim, Ivan Linow and Gavin Gordon.

Bessie Love will be the girl in "See America Thirst," the newest comedy which Universal has in production under the direction of William James Craft. Bessie Love returns to comedy to splendid company, that of Harry Langdon and Slim Summerville. The picture was already underway before Miss Love's engagements at the M-G-M studios could be fitted into Universal plans.

Two huge new stages now under construction at Movietone City in Beverly Hills will be completed early next month. With the paint and piaster scarcely dry, waiting production units will be at work in them.

Production has been going at full speed at Movietone City and the Fox Film Corporation's studio in Hollywood for several months.

"Crystal Champions," a Pathe-Van Beuren Sportlight featuring the aquatic stunts of famous swimmers, has been booked for trans-Atlantic showings aboard the S.S. Berengaria.

Leila Hyams, charming Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer player, will be seen next in William Haines' starring vehicle, "The Girl Said No."

Dorothy De Borba, newest addition to "Our Gang," will be seen in the Hal Roach, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer comedy, "Pups is Pups."

"Love in the Rough," is now announced as the final title for the picture formerly called "Like Kelly Can," which Charles Riesner recently directed for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer with Robert Montgomery, Dorothy Jordan, Benny Rubin, J. C. Nugent, Catherine Moylan and others in the cast.

Shooting on "The Freshman's Goat," which introduces the new series of Educational's Vanity Comedies has been completed and is now in the process of editing.

This comedy features Marian Shockley, whom Marshall Neilan claims as his discovery. Ray Cooke, popular juvenile of many recent feature productions, is also featured, with Ronny Rondell, Iris Adrian, Churchill Ross and Eddy Barry in the supporting cast.

Nat Ross directed.

Three of filmdom's most popular players have been added to the Amos 'n' Andy cast which already includes Sue Carol as leading lady and Alex Robb as "Kingfisher," according to an announcement by William LeBaron, Vice-President in charge of Radio Pictures production.

Universal has summarily advanced the pre-release date of Director William James Craft's first comedy of the year. "Little Accident," in order to permit it to play situations which required a laugh-producer during a month when a laugh is worth its weight in gold. This adaptation of Thomas Mitchell's play and Floyd Dell's novel opened in New York at the Globe Theatre this week and will be playing all over the country before next week is finished.

The promises held out for the future of young David Rollins when he was signed to a Fox Films contract a few years ago are being fulfilled. David recently completed a principal role in "The Big Trail," directed by Raoul Walsh. He did his work so well that he was immediately assigned to a featured part in "Up the River," a novel tale of prison life adapted from an original story by Maurine Watkins.

"Her Wedding Night," revealing the amusing and romantic adventures of a red headed movie star who tries to escape the men, and a song writer whose numerous lady friends make life miserable for him, has been selected as Clara Bow's next screen vehicle. Ralph Forbes, popular leading man of the legitimate theatre, whose last appearance in a Paramount picture was in "Beau Geste" several years ago, has been signed as Clara Bow's leading man in the Avery Hopwood farce. Others in the cast will be Charlie Ruggles and Skeets Gallagher.

"The Princess and the Plumber," for some time heralded as the first picture in which Charles Farrell and Maureen O'Sullivan will appear as a romantic team, will soon go into production with Hamilton MacFadden directing.

Bert Roach and Lucien Prival have been signed for the supporting cast. Howard Green is putting the finishing touches to the screen play and dialog and Al Rockett has been assigned as associate producer.

A new and novel idea in shorts has been conceived by Columbia Pictures, to be known as "Bedtime Stories for Grown-ups." Eddie Buzzell has been selected to do the series by reason of his long and diversified experience on the stage and screen.

Buzzell will depict the role of a radio story teller, who having tucked in the juvenile audience with a story, proceeds to unfold a yarn especially prepared for their seniors. Buzzell unseen relates the story, while members of the cast go through the action he describes.

The first of this series entitled "Never Strike Your Mother," a hilarious single reel novelty, will be released on August 8th. This will be closely folowed by, "Faith, Hope and Charity."

Eddie Quillan's second starring vehicle, for the 1930-31 season, now titled "Lookin' For Trouble," goes into immediate production at the Pathe Studios according to an announcement from the office of President E. B. Derr.

Molly O'Day, attractive Columbia star, appearing with her sister Sally O'Neill in "Sisters."